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THE ORIGIN AND TEACHING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS. III

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AN OUTLINE BIBLE-STUDY COURSE OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE

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STUDY III

CHAPTER VI

PAUL'S LAST WORK IN THE EAST, AND THE LETTER TO ROMAN CHRISTIANS

First day.—§ 22. *A tour in Macedonia, Illyricum, and Greece:* Acts 20:2, 3a; Rom. 15:19, 26 (cf. also II Cor. 8:1-6, 16-19, 22; 9:1-5). Recall the circumstances which led Paul into Macedonia, the trying times through which he was passing, and his great joy over the loyalty of the Corinthian Christians to the gospel as he had taught it to them (second month 23d and 25th days). Note, in Acts 20:2, 3a and Rom. 15:19, 26, with what zeal and effectiveness the apostle now set out to strengthen the Christian centers already established in Europe, and to make new conquests even in outlying districts such as Illyricum. Read Rom. 15:26 and the Corinthian passages cited above, noticing (a) how eager Paul was to have the gentile Christians help their poorer brothers in Judea; (b) what arguments he used in pressing this opportunity and obligation upon these European disciples; (c) the able men who helped gather the funds; and (d) with what willingness and generosity the gifts were made.

Second day.—§ 23. *A three months' visit at Corinth:* Acts 20:3a; Rom. 15:22-29. Remembering all that had happened since Paul's last visit to Corinth (cf. first month, 10th day), imagine the hearty welcome accorded him at this time and with what satisfaction he consented to prolong his stay among these tried friends (Acts 20:3a). Read Rom. 15:22-29. Satisfied that the gospel is at last

firmly rooted in the East, the veteran missionary now definitely plans to carry his message to the far West. After taking the relief funds to Jerusalem, he will set out for Rome and later for Spain, hoping some day to return East if God should spare his life.

Third day.—§ 24. *The letter to the Romans.* With a true statesman's instinct Paul takes time, before leaving Corinth, to write to the Christian believers at Rome, explaining his deep interest in, and sense of obligation to, them; why the Jerusalem journey must detain him a little longer, and why he is so eager to visit them on the way to his new work in Spain. Very tactfully he shows them that the time is ripe for him to leave the East, and then sets before them his deepest convictions regarding the fundamental message of Christianity: salvation through faith, rather than by keeping the Jewish law. In this way, as well as by his emphasis upon the basic principles of Christian morality, the apostle probably hoped to forestall any attacks of hostile Judaizers who, in the spirit of those who had followed him in Galatia and at Corinth, might seek to precede him and cause trouble at Rome before he arrived. Read Rom. 1:1-17 with the help of the following analysis, noticing especially (a) the nature of Paul's relation to the Roman Christians, and (b) the theme of the letter, vss. 16, 17.

ANALYSIS OF THE LETTER TO THE ROMANS

I. Introduction (1:1-17).

1. Salutation, including description of the author's apostleship (1:1-7).
2. Thanksgiving for the faith of the Christians in Rome, and expression of his deep interest in them (1:8-15).
3. Theme of the Letter: The gospel the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes, both Jew and Greek (1:16, 17).

II. Doctrinal Portion of the Letter:

Defense and exposition of the theme (1:18-11:36).

A. Sin and guilt universal, and hence justification by works of law impossible (1:18-3:20).

1. The guilt of the Gentiles (1:18-32).
2. The guilt of the Jews (2:1-3:20).

B. But now a righteousness apart from works of law, available through faith, for both Jews and Gentiles, has been revealed; this righteousness described and explained (3:21-5:21).

1. This righteousness comprehensively described (3:21-26).
2. Bearing of this on Jewish pride and exclusiveness (3:27-30).
3. Accordance of this teaching with law (i.e., with the Old Testament conception of the nature and office of law) shown from the case of Abraham (3:31-4:25).

4. Blessedness and excellence of this salvation (chap. 5).
 - a) Blessed consequences of justification: peace; joy in tribulation; hope of final salvation, fully assured since it rests on God's love manifested in our justification and proved by the death of Christ for us (5:1-11).
 - b) Excellence of this salvation shown by comparing and contrasting the sin and death that came through Adam with the righteousness unto life that came through Jesus Christ (5:12-21).
- C. The changed relations of those that are justified, to sin, and law, and death (chaps. 6, 7, 8).
 1. To sin (chap. 6).
 2. To law (chap. 7).
 3. To death (8:1-30).
 4. Triumphant summing-up of the blessedness of God's elect (8:31-39).
- D. The rejection of Israel (chaps. 9, 10, 11).
 1. The apostle's grief over the fact (9:1-5).
 2. Yet God is justified therein (9:6-33).
 - a) It violates no promise of God (9:6-13).
 - b) It involves no intrinsic unrighteousness in God (9:14-24).
 - c) It was foretold by the prophets (9:25-29).
 - d) The failure of the Jews to attain righteousness is due to their own lack of faith (9:30-33).
 3. The apostle's desire that they may be saved (10:1).
 4. The fault of the Jews shown more explicitly (10:2-21).
 - a) Ignorance of the divine way of righteousness (10:2-15).
 - b) Wilful resistance: they heard but obeyed not (10:16-21).
 5. The nature of this rejection explained (11:1-32).
 - a) Not of the nation *in toto* but consisting rather in the election of a part and the hardening of the rest (11:1-10).
 - b) Not absolute and final (11:11-32).
 6. Ascription of praise to God for his unsearchable wisdom (11:33-36).
- III. Hortatory Portion of the Epistle (12:1-15:13).
 1. The believer's offering of himself to God (12:1, 2).
 2. His duty as a member of the body of Christ (12:3-21).
 3. His duty as a subject of civil government (13:1-7).
 4. His duty as a member of society (13:8-10).
 5. Enforcement of all these exhortations by the nearness of "the day" (13:11-14).
 6. Concerning them that are weak in faith (14:1-15:13).
- IV. Conclusion: Personal Matters, Final Injunctions, and Doxology (15:14-16:27).

Fourth day.—With the help of the analysis read Rom. 1:18-32. Try to find, if you can, exactly what Paul regarded as the essence of gentile sin. See especially vss. 18, 32.

Fifth day.—Read 2:1-16, noticing that the apostle is simply insisting upon the *impartiality of God*, that he judges Jew and Gentile on the same principles, approving not him who *knows* the right, but him who *does* the right. Read 2:17-29 in which Paul uses this fact of God's impartiality to convict the Jew of sin.

Sixth day.—Read 3:1-20, in which the apostle considers and answers possible objections to his conclusion that the Jew is guilty equally with the Gentile. Note especially vss. 19, 20 in which may be seen the substance of what Paul has been arguing for up to this point: viz., that justification by law is an impossibility to either Jew or Gentile.

Seventh day.—Read with special care 3:21-26, which is the heart of the doctrinal part of the letter, and then answer the following questions from it: (1) Why does no man become acceptable to God by works of law? (2) By what can a man become acceptable to God? (3) Is such acceptance a matter of desert or of free grace? (4) What work of Christ for us makes possible such acceptance? Read 3:27-30, noticing how this principle of faith of necessity stops Jewish boasting and opens the door of salvation to Jews and Gentiles alike.

Eighth day.—Read 3:31-4:25, noticing that throughout this chapter, as in Gal., chaps. 3 and 4, Paul uses the case of Abraham (whom every Jew counted as his father, expecting to be saved because of this relationship; cf. Matt. 3:9 and John 8:39), to prove that from the beginning men were accepted of God not for meritorious deeds, but because of faith.

Ninth day.—Read chap. 5 with the help of the analysis. Notice especially that the purpose of this chapter is to emphasize the excellence of the salvation already described.

Tenth day.—Read chap. 6, noticing (a) the question which it discusses (vs. 1), (b) Paul's first answer to the question (vss. 2-11), (c) the exhortation based on this answer (vss. 12-14), (d) the same question in slightly different form (vs. 15) (e) the answer to this form of the question (vss. 16-23).

Eleventh day.—Read chap. 7, noticing that this chapter discusses the important question of the relationship of the Christian to the Law. In vss. 1-6 it is affirmed that we are now dead to the Law. In vss. 7-25 Paul shows that the Law, though good and holy, cannot make men holy because of the sin that dwells in them. From this only Jesus Christ can deliver.

Twelfth day.—Notice that chap. 8 is in some sense the climax of the apostle's exposition of the way of salvation. In vss. 1-25 he shows how those who are in Christ and have the spirit of Christ in them gain the victory over both sin and death, thus attaining unto full salvation, a purified spirit in a glorified body. In vss. 26-30 he shows further the certainty of the final result, (a) because of the indwelling of the Spirit teaching us to pray, (b) the eternal purpose of God resting

on his foreknowledge, and issuing in our glorification. Vss. 31-39 are the apostle's exultant psalm of triumph as he contemplates the wonderful love of God which has provided this way of salvation. Read it, not as an argument, but as a shout of triumph.

Thirteenth day.—In reading chaps. 9, 10, 11, remember that the apostle has been contending in the letter that now there is one way of salvation for Jew and Gentile alike. This could not fail sooner or later to raise the question, "What becomes then of God's special promises to the Jews in the Old Testament?" In the previous letters Paul has not answered this question, but now he discusses it at length. Bear in mind it is this *national* question which he discusses. Read chap. 9 with the help of the analysis.

Fourteenth day.—Read chap. 10 with the help of the analysis.

Fifteenth day.—Read chap. 11 with the help of the analysis.

Sixteenth day.—Review with the aid of the analysis chaps. 1 to 11 and notice that there is nowhere in these chapters any direct reference to the Judaizers (cf. Gal. chap. 1). Consider (a) whether Paul's argument is adapted to prepare the minds of the Romans against any possible attempt of the Judaizers to pervert the gospel of Christ, (b) what these facts indicate as to whether Rome had yet been visited by the Judaizers, or was only in danger of an attack from them, (c) what Paul's purpose in writing was.

Seventeenth day.—Notice that from this point on the apostle deals with matters of practical Christian morality. Read chaps. 12 and 13, following the analysis. Notice the special appropriateness of 13:1-7 to residents of the capital city.

Eighteenth day.—Begin the study of 14:1-15:13 by noticing the two matters concerning which some of the Roman Christians had conscientious scruples; then read 14:1-12 (the principle of Christian liberty and personal responsibility to the Lord), then vss. 13-23 (the principle of Christian love which bids us have more regard for our brother's good than for the exercise of our liberty), then 15:1-13 in which both parties are instructed how to act and the exhortation is enforced by appeal to Christ's example.

Nineteenth day.—Read 15:14-33 (reasons for writing, plans for the future, etc.) and form as definite an idea as you can of the apostle's state of mind at this turning-point in his missionary life. Think also of the impression such a letter must have made upon the various groups of Roman Christians. Must they not have anticipated his coming with great eagerness, having often heard of his fame and his devotion to the Cause to which they, too, were dedicated? Finally, read chap. 16 as an illustration of Paul's personal interest in his fellow-Christians. There is some doubt whether this chapter was originally a part of this letter. It may have been sent originally to some other city, or to Rome at a later time, after he had visited the city, and later have been added by an editor. Cf. the case of II Corinthians. In any case it illustrates Paul's character and spirit.

CHAPTER VII

PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT AT JERUSALEM, CAESAREA, AND ROME, AND THE LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Twentieth day.—§ 25. *The memorable journey to Jerusalem, and Paul's narrow escape from death:* Acts 20:3-6, 13-17; 21:1-3, 7-8a, 15-16, 17, 26, 27-36; 23:12-13, 16, 31-33a. Note, as you read these passages, the following points especially: (a) the recognition of Paul's leadership by these eastern churches; (b) the apostle's Christlike determination to face even death, if need be, for his gospel's sake; (c) how the relief funds and news of Paul's success in Europe were received by the church leaders in Jerusalem; (d) why the mob attacked Paul; and (e) the influence upon his Roman guards of the fact that he was a Roman citizen.

Twenty-first day.—§ 26. *Paul's first prison experiences, perilous journey, and entrance into the Roman capital:* Acts 23:35; 24:1, 22-23, 25b-27; 25:1-12; 26:32; 27:1-2, 18-20, 27, 42-44; 28:1, 11-16, 30-31. Note here, also, a number of important facts: (a) the general friendliness of the Roman officials toward Paul; (b) repeated and trying delays in securing a fair hearing; (c) the right of a Roman citizen to plead his case before the emperor himself; (d) Paul's strong conviction that God would not let even mobs of enemies, storms at sea, years of imprisonment, or the personal humiliation of his apostle hinder the great work to which he had been divinely called. In Rome, more than ever before, Paul felt the assurance of God's guiding presence (cf. Rom. 8:28).

Twenty-second day.—§ 27. *The letter to the Philippians.* Nearly a decade had passed since Paul had founded the first Christian church in Europe, at Philippi. All this time he had kept in close touch with these disciples. Twice he had visited them to strengthen their faith in the new religion (II. Cor. 7:5 ff. and Acts 20:6); time and again they had sent Paul gifts of money to relieve him from his tent-making that he might give more time to his ministry (Phil. 4:16, 15; II Cor. 11:9). Doubtless the apostle had responded gratefully by means of messengers and letters. And now, once again in Paul's time of greatest loneliness and need, the Philippians had sent Epaphroditus, one of their choice young men, with more money for his use. Meanwhile, Epaphroditus had been dangerously ill in Rome. After his recovery, and as he was about to return to Philippi, Paul had prepared this letter of thanks and encouragement for the friends in the East. Out of all this correspondence between Paul and the Philippians we have but this one choice letter; but it is rich with information regarding the inner life of this splendid missionary of the cross. Glean all possible additional facts as to the place, occasion, and purpose of writing from the following passages: Phil. 4:22; 1:12-17; 4:18; 2:19-30. Also, from 1:1-26, notice why Paul could write to them so freely and what his hopes were for the future.

ANALYSIS OF THE LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

- I. Introduction (1:1-11).
 1. Salutation (1:1, 2).
 2. Thanksgiving and prayer for the Philippians (1:3-11).
- II. Account of His own Affairs and Expectations (1:12-26).
- III. Exhortation to the Philippians (1:27-2:18).
 1. (Closely connected with II). To live worthily, even in the midst of persecutions (1:27-30).
 2. To live in unity and love, enforced by the example of Christ (2:1-11).
 3. In general, to live a worthy Christian life (2:12-18).
- IV. Concerning Timothy and Epaphroditus, and Paul's own Hope to Come to Philippi (2:19-30).
[Concluding exhortations begun, but immediately broken off (3:1).]
- V. Warning against the Error of the Judaizers and against the Opposite Error of Antinomianism (3:2-4:1).
 1. Against the Judaizers, enforced by his own experience and example (3:2-11).
 2. Disclaimer of the (Antinomian) error that the beginning of salvation is also its end (3:12-16).
 3. Against a self-indulgent (Antinomian) manner of life (3:17-21).
 4. Concluding exhortation to stand fast in the Lord (4:1).
- VI. Various Exhortations (4:2-9).
 1. To Christian unity (4:2, 3).
 2. To Christian joy and trust (4:4-7).
 3. To all virtue (4:8, 9).
- VII. Thanks for the Gift of the Philippians (4:10-20).
- VIII. Conclusion: Salutations and Benediction (4:21-23).

Twenty-third day.—Read Phil. 1:27—2:18 with the help of the analysis, stating to yourself as definitely as possible how Paul exhorts the Philippians to live, and forming as definite an idea as you can of a life lived in accordance with these teachings. (There are several verses here which might well be committed to memory as practical helps to right Christian living.)

Twenty-fourth day.—Read Phil. 2:19-30 (cf. analysis); notice the information which these verses yield about Paul's situation, expectations, companions, and ways of working; consider what light the passage throws upon the character of the persons named.

Twenty-fifth day.—Read Phil. 3:1-11 (cf. analysis), noticing (1) against whom he warns the Philippians (vss. 2, 3; where had he had to do with the same party

before?); (2) that things (esteemed by the Judaizers to be of great value before God) he himself once had (vss. 4-6); (3) what he had done with these things, what principle of life he adopted instead of them, and to what he now hoped to attain (vss. 7-11). Observe the bearing of this reference to his course, on his warning to them in vs. 2.

Twenty-sixth day.—Recall the reading of yesterday, and noticing that vs. 15 suggests that there were some Christians who fancied that through faith they had already become perfect, read vss. 12-16, noticing (1) what Paul thought about his progress, (2) toward what he was striving, and (3) by what means he thought it possible to attain it. Then read vss. 17-21, observing into what grievous error (vs. 18) some had fallen through misconception of the true way of salvation, and what Paul's feeling was concerning these. Finally read 4:1.

Twenty-seventh day.—Read Phil. 4:2-23, noticing its exhortations to joy (remember Paul's situation), its beautiful appeal to the readers to live nobly (vss. 8, 9), and the information about Paul and his relations to the Philippians which it conveys.

If you knew Paul only from this letter, would you be able to form a definite impression of his character? What would be your estimate of him?

Twenty-eighth day.—In order to gain a clearer view of the unique personality of this apostle whose writings we are studying, glance now through the Thessalonian and Galatian letters to see whether or not they confirm the impression of Paul which you have gained from the Philippian letter. Write down the leading characteristics of Paul as you find them (see especially I Thess. 1:5; 2:4-12; 3:8-10; Gal. 1:8-9, 15-16; 2:3-5, 19-20; 5:1, 22-25.)

Twenty-ninth day.—Review the Corinthian correspondence again for the same purpose (especially II Cor. 6:16; I Cor. 3:11; 4:1, 3, 15; 6:12; 9:19-23; 10:31; 13:1, 13; II Cor. 11:5-10, 23-29; 12:10; 4:16-18; 5:14-15, 20; 8:9).

Thirtieth day.—Glance through the Roman letter in the same way (especially Rom. 1:9, 16; 6:11-14; 8:14, 31, 35-39; 12:9). Notice, in all the letters so far studied, how strongly and persistently Paul's conversion-experience colors his whole life and thought. In the next, and last, study of Paul's correspondence you will, because of this review, be better able to appreciate his supreme and startling tribute to the power and wonderful personality of Jesus Christ with whose life he felt himself so closely identified.